

Andrew Jackson to Willie Blount, March 15, 1813, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO WILLIE BLOUNT.1

1 Copy.

Camp Jackson, March 15, 1813

Dear sir , I had on yesterday my feelings more awakened, than I have ever had before. It was on the receipt of the enclosed extraordinary Order from the secretary of War, ordering the dismissal of the Detachment under my command.

The order was addressed to me at the city of New Orleans, presuming that I had marched my Detachment there according to your order. What do you think of the justice of Government to make a requisition of so many men, have them assembled in an inclement season, and marched more than a thousand miles amidst Ice and snow and the dangers of the River, and then desert them without making provission for their return? Would you be willing for those brave and patriotic men, whom I have the honour to command, to be deserted in a strange and inhospitable country, where there are no resources to support them and where they would be a prey to the diseases of this unwholsome climate?

The measures of Government are dictated by policy, more than generous motives. If our brave countrymen had been discharged here, there would have been a fine harvest for petty recruiting officers to have taken advantage of their necessities, which would constrain them to enlist, in order [to] get the means of subsistence. If we have not rendered the Government any important services, it was their own fault in not pointing out an object for us. We have shewn our willing dispositions to serve them, by making many

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sacrifices of our domestic comforts. Yet they abandon us in a strange country, and have ordered us to be divested of all public property. There is no reservation, not even a tent for the canopy of a sick man's bed.

I have however from the necessity of the case determined to keep some of the tents and to march the men home in as good order as possible, and I will make every sacrifice to add to their comfort. I have required of the contractor here, twenty days rations which take my men to Colberts,² and I must trust in providence and your exertions to furnish them with supplies from there to Nashville. If I fail in those, there is one alternative left which altho' it might alarm those who are enjoying plenty and comfort at home, yet it will be resorted to by soldiers who think that their country is not gratefull, and who are pinching under lean gripe of hunger. Provisions I must have and hope you will save me from the unpleasant necessity of procuring them *via et armis* . Will you be good enough to concert measures with the contractor and asst. Depy qr. master about furnishing supplies sufficient for our march from Colberts to

² George Colbert's in the Chickasaw country, on the road from Natchez to Nashville, where it crossed the Tennessee River. See p. 226.

Nashville. Arrangements will also have to be made for the payment of my troops when they arrive at Nashville.

I have the honour to be with sentiments of my Friendly esteem yr. obt. sevt